



The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) Newsletter is a monthly venue of information and updates on afterschool programs and policies.

For more information, please contact Brooke Findley at bfindley@sppg.com or 515.243.2000.

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Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming IAA Events

All legislative events listed below will take place at the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines.

February 10 – Chrysalis Foundation Breakfast, 7 – 9

February 12 – IAA Legislative Breakfast, 7 – 9 am

February 24 – Iowa Community Education Association Breakfast, 7 – 9 am

March 17 or 24 – (date still to be finalized)– Boys and Girls Club PB & J Lunch, 11:30 – 1:00

Updated Policy Information and Resources Available on the IAA Website

The IAA has recently updated its policy page on the IAA website. Find out the IAA's policy strategy for the upcoming 2009 legislative session, how you can make a difference in afterschool policy this year, and access a printable version of Iowa's Blueprint for Afterschool – the primary communication tool for our 2009 policy work.

The IAA understands that afterschool administrators, front-line staff, and partners are busy and often struggle to find time to advocate for expanded afterschool policies at all levels. But you can make a difference! As you probably know, state politics is ultimately local. If your legislator doesn't know your program exists, there is a good chance they don't know afterschool is happening in the communities they serve. State legislators make decisions based on what they know about the needs of the individuals, families, organizations, and businesses in their district. Contact your legislator today to tell him or her about your program and the important role your program plays in the broader community.

You can make a difference in afterschool policy! [Visit the IAA's updated policy page today!](#)

Legislative update January 14, 2009

The first session of the 83rd General Assembly of the Iowa Legislature convened at 10:00 AM on January 12, 2009. Leadership in both chambers indicated during opening remarks that challenges facing this legislature are of historic proportion. One major focus of the Legislature will be disaster recovery efforts from the spring and summer tornados and flooding. In his January 13 Condition of the State speech, the Governor called for \$43 million from the state's cash reserves (the "rainy day fund") to be used to help with disaster recovery efforts. Funds for disaster recovery will be some of the only funds for new programs this session.

The other significant hurdle this session is the projected revenue shortfall for the FY10 budget. The latest estimate shows a \$700 million budget gap for the FY10 budget in addition to declining revenue in the current fiscal year that has forced cuts to current budgets. The message from leadership has been that there will be few new programs enacted this session and that everything is on the table for cuts to balance the budget. The IAA plans to utilize advocates and resources including the Blueprint for Afterschool and two legislative issue briefs to demonstrate the positive impact of afterschool programs on the state.

Remarks from the House and Senate standing education committees during their first meetings have been positive and have indicated that children are still a major priority for legislators. It will be important this session for the IAA to make its case early and often that afterschool programs are vital to Iowa. It is crucial that legislators hear from their constituents how afterschool programs benefit them and their community.

For additional information on the IAA's 2009 advocacy effort, contact Ben Banowetz at bbanowetz@sppg.com or 515-243-2000.

Engaging Children and Youth in Advocacy

The 2009 legislative session officially began on Monday, January 12. As the session progresses, your program may engage in advocacy efforts, which can be used as a tool to teach children and youth about the legislative and advocacy processes. This month, we focus on engaging youth in meaningful ways and identifying examples of how a program in Iowa has engaged youth in advocacy efforts.

The 2005 *Meaningful Student Involvement Guide to Students as Partners in School Change* outlined situations when student involvement is meaningful. These include:

- » when students are allies and partners with adults in improving schools;
- » when students have the training and authority to create real solutions to the challenges that schools face in learning, teaching, and leadership;
- » when schools, including educators and administrators, are accountable to the direct consumers – students themselves; and
- » when student-adult partnerships are a major component of every sustainable, responsive, and systemic approach to transforming schools.



The Children and Family Urban Ministries (CFUM) program in Des Moines has engaged students to advocate for themselves and issues that concern them in many meaningful ways. Last year the program received a grant to teach youth how to be advocates, and it was through that funding that the program was able to participate in a legislative breakfast at the State Capitol; invite speakers to teach youth how to tell their stories and how to speak with legislators; participate in a call-in campaign to voice why afterschool programs are important to youth; and research issues and legislative bills that interested them. Youth spent a day at the Capitol learning about the legislative process and met with staff from the offices of Governor Culver and Senators Grassley and Harkin to tell their stories and ask questions about the leaders' priorities. Staff members of these offices were impressed with the questions and knowledge that youth expressed and are interested in having the youth return to speak with legislative leaders directly.



Kids and youth regularly engage in letter writing to legislators concerning issues chosen by them. In reaction to community conversations held between program participants and local community leaders, the Des Moines Register interviewed youth of all ages, where they posed questions to the presidential candidates prior to the Iowa Caucuses. Additionally, youth were also engaged in writing poetry and expressing how they have been influenced by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in another project designed to help youth find their voices.

Below is an excerpt from the Child and Family Urban Ministries newsletter about the effect of the project on a young man in the program:

In Emilio's broad educational experience, I know he heard the stories of people like Dr. King and Dr. Vince Lewis (a local school principal) and their work to make things right for children. I know he learned that his voice was important. I know he was taught that the world needed his gifts and abilities. I know he discovered that not everyone had what they needed. I know he found out that he could make a difference. He learned poetry and the power of words, even his words. He visited the State Capitol, not as a tourist but as a citizen. He not only learned about the decisions made there that affect children, but he talked to those making the decisions—shared his experience of immigration and poverty and how the decision makers could help make things right. He and a friend suggested raising money to build wells for children in Africa in the name of Dr. King. They succeeded in leading that effort—raising \$4000 and sending half to Uganda and half to the memorial that is being built in Washington D.C. to honor Dr. King.

When asked about the advocacy activities, Children and Family Urban Ministries Operations Director Linda Danielson emphasized the opportunity to empower kids and youth to find their own voices. "We want them to know that they can change their world," Danielson said.

To watch the video that youth from the Child and Family Urban Ministries program contributed to leading up to the presidential election, go to this website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hn1DoJq6H4>

83rd General Assembly Legislators

Senate Committees	House Committees
Agriculture • Gene Fraise (D, District 46), Chair	Administration and Rules • Brian Quirk (D, District 15), Chair
Appropriations • Robert E. Dvorsky (D, District 15), Chair	Agriculture • Dolores Mertz (D, District 8), Chair
Commerce • Steve Warnstadt (D, District 1), Chair	Appropriations • Jo Oldson (D, District 61), Chair
Economic Growth • Roger Stewart (D, District 13), Chair	Commerce • Janet Petersen (D, District 64), Chair
Education • Brian Schoenjahn (D, District 12), Chair	Economic Growth • Roger Thomas (D, District 24), Chair
Ethics • John P. “Jack” Kibbie (D, District 4), Chair	Education • Roger Wendt (D, District 2), Chair
Government Oversight • Thomas G. Courtney (D, District 44), Chair	Environmental Protection • Donovan Olson (D, District 48), Chair
Human Resources • Amanda Ragan (D, District 7), Chair	Ethics • Mark Davitt (D, District 74), Chair
Judiciary • Keith A. Kreiman (D, District 47), Chair	Human Resources • Mark Smith (D, District 43), Chair
Labor and Business Relations • Dick L. Dearden (D, District 34), Chair	Judiciary • Kurt Swaim (D, District 94), Chair
Local Government • Herman C. Quimbach (D, District 23), Chair	Labor • Rick Olson (D, District 68), Chair
Natural Resources and Environment • Dennis H. Black (D, District 21), Chair	Local Government • Mary Gaskill (D, District 93), Chair
Rules and Administration • Michael E. Gronstal (D, District 50), Chair	Natural Resources • Paul Bell (D, District 41), Chair
State Government • Michael Connolly (D, District 14), Chair	Public Safety • Jim Lykam (D, District 85), Chair
Transportation • Tom Rielly (D, District 38), Chair	State Government • Mary Mascher (D, District 77), Chair
Veterans Affairs • Daryl Beall (D, District 25), Chair	Transportation • Geri Huser (D, District 42), Chair
Ways and Means • Joe Bolkcom (D, District 39), Chair	Veterans Affairs • Ray Zirkelbach (D, District 31), Chair
	Ways and Means • Paul Shomshor (D, District 100), Chair

Iowa School Age Care Alliance (ISACA) Offers a Mini Winter Conference

Character Counts! In Iowa is proudly presenting “A Character Builder’s Toolbox” at the ISACA Winter Mini-Conference. The Conference will allow you to learn the tools to be a great Character Builder in your before and after school program for k-6 grade students. The conference will provide hands-on training plus a Program Guide with more than 100 activities designed to bring learning and growth through action learning, children’s literature and artistic expression.

Attendance is FREE due to the support of Child Care Resource and Referral, ISACA, Character Counts! In Iowa and the Children’s Variety. For more information, please contact Leslie Glenn at 515-432-3084, ext. 1, or LeslieGlenn@msn.com. [Click here](#) to view the conference flyer. Registrations are due by Friday, February 6, 2009.

Opportunity to Host Aquafina Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit and Run Local Competition

Major League Baseball (MLB) is inviting communities to register for free to receive a Local Administrator Kit to host the Aquafina Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit and Run Local Competition. The kit will include materials such as promotional posters, registration forms, award ribbons, a “Strike Zone” banner for pitching and other information. The competition is open to boys and girls ages 7 to 14 and can be hosted on a baseball diamond or any open field.

To learn more and register, [click here](#). For more information, contact Abby Lane at a.lane@lejsports.com or call 678.994.0107.

Every Child Matters Releases President Helping Children Report

Every Child Matters is releasing a new report in January to coincide with the inauguration of President Barack Obama. The report will be distributed during the first-ever Children’s Inaugural ball and is intended to remind everyone of the central role past presidents have played in improving child well-being. To read the report, [click here](#).